

wherein the system is configured to

- (i) to control a teleconference call
  - (1) being communications between users of the AV devices,
- (ii) by generating
  - (1) at least one call handle,
    - i. to define each connection
      - i. between an AV device and its associated port,
  - (2) each call handle defining the state
    - i. between the respective device and port
    - ii. the state being at least one of the group consisting of
      - i. idle, ringing, active, and hold states; and
- (iii) by establishing communications
  - (1) between the devices
  - (2) based on the appropriate call handles' states.

16. The system according to claim 15, further comprising

- (a) a switch; and
- (b) at least one signal processor

wherein the system is further configured to

- (i) generate a call handle to define
  - (1) a connection
    - i. from each device in the teleconference call
    - ii. to the switch and
  - (2) a connection
    - i. from the switch

- ii. to the processor
- iii. for each device in the teleconference call.

17. The teleconferencing system of claim 15, wherein the system is further configured to:

- (a) detect,
  - (i) during a first teleconference call
    - (1) between users of first and second of the devices,
  - (ii) an attempt
    - (1) from a user of a third of the devices
    - (2) to initiate a teleconference
      - i. with the user of the second device,
- (b) notify
  - (i) the user of the second device
  - (ii) of the attempt; and
- (c) allow
  - (i) the user
    - (1) of the second device
  - (ii) to add
    - (1) the third device
    - (2) to the first teleconference call.

18. The teleconferencing system according to claim 17, wherein the system can accommodate:

- (a) detecting and adding
  - (i) a fourth device
  - (ii) to the first teleconference call.

19. The teleconferencing system of claim 18, wherein the system is further configured to

- (a) allow any device user
  - (i) active in a teleconference call
    - (1) with at least one other user,
- (b) to do at least one of the group consisting of:
  - (i) place on hold,
    - (1) at least one of the other users;
  - (ii) disconnect
    - (1) at least one of the other users; and
  - (iii) select
    - (1) a new user
      - i. from among a plurality of potential users and
    - (2) add the new user
      - i. to an active teleconference call.

20. The teleconferencing system of claim 15, wherein the system can

- (a) support a maximum number of N calls
  - (i) for an AV device; and
- (b) enable a user,
  - (i) operating that device,
  - (ii) to select N of M possible calls,
  - (iii) when faced with M possible calls
    - (1) where M is greater than N.

21. A teleconferencing system comprising:

- (a) at least three AV devices, each capable of
  - (i) originating and reproducing
  - (ii) user audio and video related signals; and
- (b) at least one communication path;
  - (i) arranged for transport
    - (1) of audio and video signals,
    - (2) between the AV devices,
  - (ii) to define a teleconference call
    - (1) between the device users,
    - (2) in which user audio and video is displayed at a device,

wherein the system is configured to

- (i) allow a user
  - (1) of any of the devices
  - (2) active in a teleconference call
    - i. with other users,
- (ii) to do at least one of the group consisting of:
  - (1) place on hold,
    - i. at least one of the other users; and
  - (2) disconnect
    - i. at least one of the other users.

22. A method of conducting a teleconferencing using a system including:

a plurality of AV devices, each capable of

originating and reproducing

audio and video signals,

a plurality of communications ports;

at least one communication path

arranged for transport of audio and video signals,

between the AV devices,

by way of at least one port,

associated with each device,

the method comprising the steps of

(a) controlling communications

(i) between users of AV devices,

(b) by generating

(i) at least one call handle,

associated port,

(1) to define each connection between an AV device and its

(2) each call handle defining the state

i. between the respective device and port

ii. the state being at least one of the group consisting of

i. idle, ringing, active, and hold states, and

(c) establishing communications

(i) between devices

(ii) based on the relevant call handles' states.

23. The method according to claim 22, wherein

the system includes

a switch; and

at least one signal processor and

wherein the method further comprises the steps of

- (a) generating a call handle to define
  - (i) a connection
    - (1) from each device in the teleconference call
    - (2) to the switch and
  - (ii) a connection
    - (1) from the switch
    - (2) to the processor
    - (3) for each device in the teleconference call.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein the method further comprises the steps of:

- (a) detecting,
  - (i) during a first teleconference call
    - (1) between a first and second of the users,
  - (ii) an attempt
    - (1) by a third user
    - (2) to initiate a second teleconference call
    - (3) to the second user,
- (b) notifying
  - (i) the second user
  - (ii) of the attempt; and
- (c) allowing
  - (i) the second user
  - (ii) to add
    - (1) the third caller

(2) to the first teleconference call.

25. The method of claim 23, further comprising the steps of:

(a) detecting and adding

(i) a fourth user

(ii) to the teleconference call.

26. The method of claim 22, further comprising the steps of

(a) allowing any device user

(i) active in a teleconference call

(1) with at least one other user,

(ii) to do at least one of the group consisting of:

(1) place on hold,

i. at least one of the other users;

(2) disconnect

i. at least one of the other users; and

(3) select

i. a new user

i. from among a plurality of potential users and

ii. add the new user

i. to an active teleconference call.

27. The method of claim 22, wherein the system can  
support a maximum number of N calls

for an AV device;

the method further comprising the steps of:

- (a) enabling a user,
  - (i) operating that device,
- (b) to select N of M possible calls,
  - (i) when faced with M possible calls
  - (1) where M is greater than N.

28. A method of conducting a teleconference using a system including at least three AV devices, each capable of

originating and reproducing

user audio and video related signals; and

at least one communication path;

arranged for transport

of audio and video signals,

between the AV devices,

to define a teleconference call

between the device users,

in which user audio and video is displayed at a device,

the method comprising the steps of

- (a) allowing a user
  - (i) of any of the devices
  - (ii) active in a teleconference call
    - (1) with other users,
- (b) to do at least one of the group consisting of:
  - (i) place on hold,